

THE
PERSONAL UNION
 OF THE
DIVINE and HUMAN NATURE
 IN OUR
 Blessed Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST;
 AND THE
 BENEFITS of it to MANKIND.
 AND THE
COMFORTS of a Good Conscience,
 AND THE
TORMENTS of an Evil ONE.
 IN
TWO SERMONS.

Preached at TAVISTOCK, in DEVON.

By THOMAS SALMON, L.L.D.

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MD.CC.LIII.

PERSONAL UNION

OF THE

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

Blended Loyalty and Devotion

TO THE

INTERESTS OF THE CANADIAN

PEOPLE

COMFORTS OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE

IN THE

PERFORMANCE OF THEIR DUTY



TWO

THOUSAND

THREE

FOUR

FIVE

SIX

SEVEN

EIGHT

NINE

THE
PERSONAL UNION
OF THE
DIVINE and HUMAN NATURE
IN OUR
Blessed Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST;
AND THE
BENEFITS of it to MANKIND.

The Author living at a great Distance from London, and being therefore unable himself to correct the Press, requests the Reader to pardon the following Errors.

E R R A T A.

PAGE 2, Line 5, *read* to have been, l. 6, *for* when, *r.* where, l. 8, *for* say, *r.* says, p. 3. l. 2, *for* when *r.* where, p. 7, l. 23, *for* which *r.* when, p. 9, l. 7, *for* then *r.* there, l. 34, *for* when *r.* where.

JOHN i. 14.

And the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.

THIS Evangelist, who long outlived the rest of the Apostles, lived to see a Generation of Men arise, still retaining the Name of *Christians*, of more knowing and enlightened Christians, but *denying* the Lord that *bought them*; denying him to be *so* their Lord, as to be *God over all, blessed for ever*.

Therefore is St. *John* more large and express than those who writ before, in asserting the Truth of his divine Nature.

And it is but too visible how far this Infidel Generation has of late revived, and prevailed among us! who, like those of old, vainly puffed up with high Conceits of their own Knowledge, by an empty Pomp of Learning, to *raise* themselves, have made it their Business to *degrade* their Lord; and to prove him no other than the Virgin's, if not *the Carpenter's Son*.

Wherefore, the better to guard against the deceitful Reasonings of this Sort of Men, and that while we remember our Lord as becoming Man, we may not forget him to be God; I shall, in my further Consideration of these Words of St. *John*, endeavour to define,

First, The Person spoken of, *The Word*; and what it is that is here affirmed of him, *That he was made Flesh, and dwelt among us*.

Secondly, The Manner of his Appearance, and dwelling here: His Disciples *beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father*. And,

Thirdly, The Benefits he brought with him, as he is said to be *full of Grace and Truth*.

First, for the Person, and what it is that is affirm'd of him. That it is no other than our Blessed Lord, who is expressed by *The Word*, whatever that Title may import, is so exceeding plain, both from what goes before, and after, that it scarce needs remarking; for that it is *He* undoubtedly who is *the only begotten of the Father* *. It is He of whom *John the Baptist* came for a *Witness*; and but three Verses after the Text, he is expressly named *Jesus Christ*.

But what it is that is signified by his being *The Word*, is not altogether so plain from the Text itself, which is designed rather to affirm somewhat else of him *as* the Word, than barely that he *was* the Word: Thus much, however, is evident from hence, that *The Word*, whatever be meant by it, is something that had a real Being before it *was made Flesh*, for of nothing can nothing be affirmed.

* *John* i. 7, and 15.

For a more clear and explicit Account of *The Word*, we need look no farther than the Beginning of this Chapter, where St. *John*, as first using the Term, is particularly careful to acquaint us with the Notion he affixes to it, tho' it is what the Learned have shewn, not only Christians and *Jews*, but even Heathens to have been before that Time not wholly unacquainted with.

Having affirmed, that in the *Beginning was The Word*, he adds both *where* that Word was, and *what* it was, and how he meant it to be *in the Beginning*. *And the Word*, says he, *was with God*, partaking of the same Glory and Blessedness with the Father, and Fountain of the Deity: So Jesus also evidently declares of himself in his Prayer to God, at the Approach of his Sufferings: *And now, O Father, glorify me with thine own self, with the Glory which I had with Thee before the World was.* *

The Evangelist here goes on to shew, that he *was so with God*, so equal in Glory and Majesty to him, as to *be God*; and the Word *was God*.

Can Words then express a Thing more plainly, than that the Word, or Jesus Christ is *very God*? We read indeed in the Old Testament of Kings being *called Gods*, in respect of the Height and Dignity of their Office, and their Power derived immediately from Heaven; but this with manifest Distinction from their being any of them really *a God*. We read of *Moses* being *instead of God* to *Aaron*, and *a God* to *Pharaoh*; and of Angels sometimes, when delivering Messages in the Name of God, assuming the Title of God himself: But where is there such another Expression as this, either in the Old Testament or the New? When is it directly affirmed of one single Person, and that without any thing of particular Reference or Allusion, that he *was God*? as it is here said, *The Word was God*.

And is it possible to imagine, that whereas the Gospel was particularly designed to bring Men off from Idolatry, and the Worship of Dæmons, or dead Men, an Evangelist, or Gospel-writer, but of common Sense, not to say the infallible Spirit who over-ruled his Pen, should give such Countenance to that Idolatry, as to let such an Expression fall from him, and stand in the Front of his Writings, if our crucified Saviour were not also *the Lord of Glory*? — Certainly, however the Men of Learning and Leisure might, by their nice Distinctions, and elaborate Criticisms, happily disengage themselves; so dangerous a Snare could never have been laid for the Poor and Illiterate, for whom the Gospel was also writ, as well as to whom it was at first chiefly preached.

The Apostle, however, further explains how he had said, *The Word was* in the Beginning; tho' *that*, one would think, might be sufficiently plain to any, that had once read the first of *Genesis*, where *Moses* uses the very same Expression; *In the Beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth*; i. e. sure in the Beginning of Things, before, as yet, any Thing was made, or before the World was: *In this Beginning*, adds the Evangelist, *was the Word with God*; and if he was before any Thing *was made*, then was not he himself *made*: This he farther assures us of, by saying, *All Things were made by him, and without him was not any Thing made, that was made*.

But may it not be said, this *Making* of all Things relates only to the Things of *this visible World*, which, tho' granted to be made *by the Word*, yet might he

himself have been *before made*? To obviate this, the Margin of our Bible refers us to another Text; where not only this, but that other Cavil of a moral Creation is effectually refuted: * *For by him*, says St. Paul, *who is the Image of the invisible God, and First-born of every Creature*; i. e. as the Nicene Creed seems to express the Sense of this Place, *Begotten of his Father before all Worlds*; or, as others will have it, in allusion to the Right of the First-born, *who is the Lord and Heir of all Things*: *By him were all Things created that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, visible and invisible*; whether they be *Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers, all Things were created by him, and for him*: Which last Expression no less effectually cuts off that other Evasion, of his being only God's *Agent or Instrument* in the Creation; forasmuch as all Things were not only made *by him* as the Cause, but *for him* as the End of their Creation.—— And the wise Man hath told us, That † *the Lord hath made all Things for himself*; as the Author to the Hebrews doth, || *that he who built all Things is God*.

Whether, then, we will allow any Reference to this *personal Word*, or no, in that Account Moses gives of the Creation, where he so often repeats, *God said*, let it be so; or in that of the Psalmist, *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made*; and of the Apostle, *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens of old*; and other like Passages of Scripture: Thus much, I think, is certain, if Words can make us certain of any thing; That *One* personally distinguished by the Title of *The Word*, did make the World; That he who made the World could be no other than *God*. and that he who is called *The Word*, and that made the World, and consequently is *God*, is no other than he, who, *as Man*, is called also *Jesus Christ*.

This Distinction of Names, or Titles, we may observe the Apostle plainly to make with respect to the different Natures of our Saviour; for when he had once acquainted us with *the Word being made Flesh*, and proceeds to give us an Account of what he did in the *Flesh*; he ever after drops that Title, and throughout his Gospel calls him only *Jesus*, or *Christ*: Tho' when he comes to speak of him again in his *Revelations*, as after his Ascension, and to represent him as Leader of the Armies of Heaven, as *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*: He resumes that Title, and tells us expressly his Name is called § *The Word of God*:

Nor does there seem to be wanting a substantial Reason why we may conceive the Son of God, the second Person of the ever-blessed Trinity, to have been particularly distinguished by this Title: As he made the World, and was properly *the Life*; gave to all Life and Breath, and all Things: So the Evangelist also expressly terms him, *The Light of Men*; and this he was, not only as he originally endowed them with that *Light* of Reason which *enlightens every Man that cometh into the World*, but more especially as it was *he* who all along made Revelations of the divine Nature and Will to Men: He was, as it is thought, that *Angel of the Covenant* under the Law; and it is most undoubted, he was the immediate Author of the Gospel Dispensation; and is *the Head over all Things to the Church*; of whom the Apostle gives this convincing Testimony,

* Col. i. 16.

† Prov. xvi. 4.

|| Heb. iii. 4.

§ Rev. xix. 13.

* No

* *No Man hath seen God at any Time ; the only begotten Son which is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared him : And we know that the Holy Ghost, who after our Lord's Ascension, was to teach the Apostles all Things, and preside in the Church on Earth, was † to receive of his, and shew it unto them.*

But whether this be admitted as a Reason of the Appellation or no, that the Son was immediate Author of the *Reveal'd Word* ; that the Knowledge Men had of the divine Nature and Will, was in a peculiar Manner owing to Him, as it is by no Means *necessary*, if it may be *possible* for us to assign the *true Reason* ; yet will the former Reasoning be equally certain, that *The Word*, the Person spoken of in the Text, *was God*——— This is a Truth that might be made out of our Blessed Lord, the Man *Christ Jesus*, by many other infallible Proofs ; but it is more than Time I proceed to consider

What it is that is directly affirmed of *the Word*, *That he was made Flesh, and dwelt among us.*

That he who was the Son of God, and did at first *make Man*, himself vouchsafed to be *made Man*: For by an usual Figure, and one that is very well known in Scripture, in this particular Instance, Part of the Nature of Man, *Flesh*, is put for the Whole ; and it is as much as to say, That *that eternal Word* took upon him the human Nature.

But the better to set forth the extreme Condescension of our Blessed Lord, his *Flesh*, the inferior Part of our Nature is only mentioned. He had condescended greatly, had he taken upon him the Nature of Angels, and more, if he had taken upon him only the spiritual and immortal *Soul* of Man ; but to take upon him *our Flesh*, whereby, to become capable of dying for our Redemption, was such an amazing Self-abasement in the Godhead, as we can never sufficiently admire and adore.

Indeed our *Flesh* is not only the *lower*, but much the *worst Part* of ourselves ; in which dwelleth no good Thing, but an Opposition to our best Desires, and it is found by woful Experience to be guilty of numberless Prevarications, even in the very best of Men : But we are not therefore to suppose our Blessed Saviour took upon him these *Corruptions* of the *Flesh* ; tho' in all Things, as the Author to the *Hebrews* tells us, in all other Things, it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren : Tho' he was tempted in all Points like as we are, yet was there always this Exception, *without Sin.*

He took upon him such pure and undefiled *Flesh* as *Adam's* was, when he first came out of his Creator's Hands, without the least Tincture of *sinful Corruption*. To this End was he born, as our Evangelist tells us, of such as he privileges || *to become the Sons of God* ; not of the Will of the *Flesh*, nor of the Will of Man, but of God ; conceived by the Holy Ghost, and brought forth by a still, pure, and untouched Virgin : So runs the Message to that *blessed above Women*, § *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also, that holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*

* John i. 18.

† Job. xvi. 4.

|| John i. 13.

§ Luke i. 35.

Thus

Thus was *the Word made Flesh*; and being so, *he dwelt among us, tabernacled, or pitched his Tabernacle*, the original Word properly signifies, took up his Abode for some Time; for upwards of thirty two Years at least, upon this Earth.

As he had from the Fall of Man undertaken the Work of our Redemption, it is not improbable, but in the foregoing Ages of the World he might sometimes assume a bodily Appearance, as we often read of Angels delivering their Messages from God in the Shape of Men, but this was *occasionally* only, and without being ever *vitally* united to a Body.——Now in these last Ages, *when the Fullness of Time was come, did God send forth his Son actually made of a Woman*: He came into the World clothed with a real Body of human Flesh, born of the *Virgin Mary*; past through the several Stages of Life; in Infancy was wrapt up in swaddling Cloaths, underwent the Infirmities of Childhood; the same common Wants and Affections of other Men; and at last the most public Sufferings of Death.

And that not *his Body* only was human, but that however *vitally* united to the infinite Perfections of the Godhead, he had also a truly *human Soul*, St. Luke infallibly assures us, when acquainting us with the gradual Encrease, as well of the Perfections of his *Mind as Body*; * *Jesus, says he, encreased in Wisdom and Stature, and in Favour with God and Man*.——The mean and private Life he led before his Baptism, the Persecutions and Sufferings, and at last disgraceful Death he afterwards submitted to, did so confirm the Reality of his *human Nature*, that the World took little Notice of the *divine*; but *his Disciples who beheld his Glory*, at least as afterwards taught to understand the Things that they had *heard and seen*, had Evidence sufficient to confirm them in the Truth of *that* also: Wherefore, as we have received of *them* both by plain and express *Scripture*, and by the constant *Tradition* of the Church in all Ages, *We do now believe and confess, "that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man: God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the World; and Man of the Substance of his Mother, born in the World; perfect God and perfect Man, of a reasonable Soul, and human Flesh subsisting."*

But how *this Glory of the Word Incarnate* appear'd to his Disciples in the Manner of his dwelling here, to be the Glory, *as of the true only begotten of the Father*, is what I proposed to make out. *And we beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father*.

By the *only begotten of the Father*, I understand the true, proper, and essential Son of God, of the same Nature with him, as I have already shewn *The Word* to be; nor does this Phrase imply any less, but that he had the *divine Nature* by Communication from *the Father*, the Head and Fountain of the Deity; tho' this without *beginning* of Being, for otherwise he were not God; from all Eternity one with him; *God of God*; and that as none other is; for tho' the Holy Ghost be also *God of God*, yet is he never said in *Scripture* to be *begotten* of God, but in a different Manner to *proceed* from him; both from *the*

* Luke ii. 52.

Father, and from the Son——This being premised, I proceed to shew how, notwithstanding he appeared in the Form of a Servant, as one of the meanest of Men, the Glory of the Divinity, yet shone forth in the *Word Incarnate*.

And that which we may suppose his Apostles, in the first Place, to have beheld, was *the Glory* of his *divine Works*, his Miracles; whereby it appeared plainly, that he held all created Nature in his Hand; that he had no less than the infinite Power of the Creator and Governor of the World at Command.—This our Evangelist expressly tells us in the next Chapter, upon that first Miracle which he wrought in *Cana of Gallilee*, the turning Water into Wine; * *That he thereby manifested forth his Glory, and his Disciples believed on him.*

How apparently visible then must be *his Glory*! How strongly convincing the Evidence, from that constant Series, and vast Variety of Miracles he afterwards wrought throughout the whole Course of his Ministry! From his giving *Feet to the Lamæ, Eyes to the Blind; healing every Sickness, and every Disease*, however otherwise incurable, by his all-powerfull Word.

From his commanding not only *Winds and Waves*, but the yet more boisterous Ragings of *Devils* too: And, which does above all other, evidence a divine Power, from his raising, in repeated Instances, the Dead to Life. So that even the Multitudes could say, † *When Christ cometh, will he do more Miracles than those which this Man doth?*

Nor did he only *do among them the Works that no Man ever did*, Miracles more, and greater than those of *Moses*, and all the *Prophets* put together; but he *did* them after a Manner too plainly superior to that in which theirs were wrought; not by *particular Application* to Heaven upon every *particular Emergency*, but by a Power *always present*, and *residing* in Himself: This the Woman labouring under an incurable Bloody-flux seemed to evidence her Belief of, when, without any previous Address, seeking a Cure by *the Touch of his Garment*.——And when looking up to his Father in the raising of *Lazarus*, that peculiarly divine Work, he himself gives them to understand, that it was not for Want of any fresh Assistance, but ‖ *because of the People which stood by, that they might believe the Father had sent him*.——Add to this the same Powers communicated by him to his Disciples; That not only *Diseases*, but *Devils* too, should be made *subject to them*; and this alone might have been sufficient to shew him *the Brightness of his Father's Glory*.

But they wanted not other no less sensible Evidences of it; St. *John* particularly, who was one of those his three select Companions, and *Eye-Witnesses* of his Majesty at his Transfiguration; when, as St. *Peter*, another of them, tells us, § *He received from God the Father Honour and Glory; when there came such a Voice to him from the excellent Glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*. His Enemies too, in that *their Hour, and the Power of Darkness*, when coming with an armed Multitude to apprehend him, might have been convinced of his being more than *human*; as they were all, at the bare Look of him, instantly struck to the Ground.

Nay, even in the very Article of Death, did the Rays of his Glory shine

* *John* ii. 11.

† *John* vii. 31.

‖ *John* xi. 42.

§ 2 *Pet.* i. 16, 17.

through the Crown of Thorns ; such were the Evidences of a divine Power attesting to him ; in the rending of the Rocks, opening the Graves, &c. that the Heathen Centurion cries out, *Truly this was the Son of God.*

But however *manifest his Glory* was in the Course of his Ministry, and whatever Notion his Disciples might have entertained of his being the Son of God before (which, it must be granted, they don't seem then to have understood in a strict and proper Sense) At the Time of his Sufferings and Death, they thought no more of the great Things that he had done ; all their Hopes of a triumphant Saviour were buried with him ; and however they might afterward, some of them, design Respect to the *Man*, they could never have had such a Thought as to embalm *the God.*

It was not yet long, *the Sun of Righteousness* suffered this Eclipse ; with greater Lustre than ever did he soon break forth from under the Shade of Death : Scarce had little more than thirty Hours Continuance in the Grave shewn him truly *Man*, when, by his Resurrection from the Dead, * *he was declared the Son of God with Power.*

A Demonstration so powerful and convincing was this, that the hitherto *Infidel* Apostle, upon the Sight and Feeling of his pierced Hands and Side, immediately cries out, *My Lord and my God!* acknowledges him to be no less than a God Omnipotent, that could so break through the Gates of Death and Hell.

Neither was this the last Evidence their Senses had of his being the only begotten of the Father ; they afterwards beheld him in a visible Manner *received up into Glory.* They beheld the wonderful Effects of his Ascension, which, as *St. Peter* tells the *Jews*, upon the visible Descent of the Holy Ghost, under the Appearance of *fiery Tongues*, † *He being by the right Hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the Promise of the Holy Ghost, hath shed forth this which ye do now see and hear.*

Thus did the Apostles, notwithstanding the Meanness of his outward Appearance, and the obscure Manner of his dwelling here, *behold the Glory of the Word Incarnate, to be the Glory of the only begotten of the Father.*

I am now to represent the Benefits the Word Incarnate brought into the World with him, as he is *said to be full of Grace and Truth.*—This seems to be spoken in Opposition to the Law of *Moses* ; *The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.*

It is not to be imagined, that there was no such Thing as *Truth* in the World before Christ came ; or that the *Jewish* Religion, instituted by God himself, was not *the true Religion* ; so far from that, that as there never is, or can be but *one* true Religion ; so is that Religion always substantially *one* and *the same* : They were under Obligation to the *same* moral Duties that we are ; were Partakers, in some measure, of the *same* Grace, and will undoubtedly be sav'd by the same common Redeemer.

This Religion indeed may be, and has been, externally different in different Ages of the World.—*Their* Sacraments foreshewing chiefly what was yet to

* *Rom. i. 4.*

† *Acts ii. 33.*

come to pass ; and *ours*, being Memorials of what is already accomplished : *Their* Church consisting chiefly of one *particular* Nation, and ours alike extending to *all* the Nations of the World——*Their* Religion but as the Crepusculum, or Dawn of Day to Men, before benighted in Pagan Blindness, and Idolatry ; *ours* as the Noon-day Brightness : But still is it the *same* Sun that has given, and gives Light to both, however different the Degrees ; according to that of the Author to the *Hebrews*, *Christ the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*

The *Jewish* Religion, therefore, was no less *true* in itself, so far as it went, than *ours* ; but its *Truth* in great measure depended upon this subsequent Dispensation of the Gospel : As to its Promises and Predictions, nothing can be plainer than that the Truth of them must depend upon their receiving a just Accomplishment : Thus the Promise, that *the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head*, must wait its Completion, till, *in the Fullness of Time, God send forth his Son made of a Woman* : Thus the Prophecy of dying *Jacob*, that *the Scepter should not depart from Judah until Shiloh come*, must prove itself true, in our Lord Christ springing from that Tribe, before the final Destruction of the *Jewish* Polity and Government.

The same may be said of the Types, or Figures and Ceremonies of the *Jewish* Law : They were *true* Resemblances, and of present Use to distinguish the peculiar People of God from other Nations ; but *as* Resemblances their Truth must be evidenced by Agreement with the Thing they were designed to represent ; and the Appearance of *the Shadow*, as it was owing to the distant Substance, being no more than *Shadow*, tho' *truly* such ; when *that* fully appears, of course must vanish : Thus did the Sacrifices of Bulls and Goats obtain their final End, in that full, perfect and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction, *The Offering of the Body of Christ once for all* : Thus does Circumcision give place to the more express Precepts of inward Purity, and God's granting to the *Gentiles* also Repentance unto Life.

Then for the moral Precepts of the *Mosaic Law*, tho' *they* indeed are of eternal Obligation, and unchangeably *the same*, yet may our blessed Lord be not improperly said to have brought Truth to *them* also, by his vindicating them from the false Glosses and Misinterpretations of *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and the Corruptions of *Jewish* Tradition ; by urging them upon Men afresh with his divine Authority and Example ; and by enforcing them with the express Sanction of *eternal* Rewards and Punishments.——Thus, therefore, did *the Word Incarnate* bring *Truth* into the World, or to the *Jewish* Religion in its several Parts ; as He was the Accomplishment of its Promises and Prophecies ; the Archetype or original Pattern of its Types and Figures ; the Substance of its Shadows ; and the Restorer of its moral Precepts to their just Sense and Vigor.

We are next to see how he brought also *Grace* to Man.——'Tis true there never was but one Covenant of *Grace* ; which God was pleased to admit Mankind to, immediately upon the Fall of our first Parents ; and by virtue of which alone, *Adam*, or any of his Posterity, ever *have*, or *can be saved* : But as
the

the Conditions of this have been at some times more clear and explicit ; the Promises, and Assistances more exalted and engaging ; we find it in Scripture frequently stiled a *New Covenant*, and after a peculiar Manner *Grace*.

For whereas the Letter of the Law runs thus——*This if a Man do, he shall live* :——And, *the Soul that sinneth, it shall die* : (not that we are to think nothing less than an *absolute* and *unsinning* Obedience would then render a Man accepted ; there was still a Reserve of Mercy even for the Soul, who because of a Transgression, might be *cut off from its People*;)——The Terms of the Covenant under the Gospel are express ; * *I will be merciful to their Unrighteousness ; and their Iniquities will I remember no more*——Our blessed Lord tells us of himself, that *he came to call Sinners to Repentance* : And the great Gospel Invitation runs to the very *chiefest of Sinners*.——Thus did he bring *Grace* into the World ; † *as by him all that believe are justified from all Things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses*, as merely such.

This he did also as God gave not to him the Spirit by Measure, but in him dwelt all the Fullness of the Godhead ; so does he expressly promise, and communicate larger Measures of his Grace and Spirit for enabling his Disciples to perform a better Obedience : ‖ *I will put my Laws into their Mind, and write them upon their Hearts* : This St. Paul makes a main End of Christ's coming ; for what, says he §, *the Law could not do in that it was weak through the Flesh ; God sending his own Son in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, and for Sin, condemned Sin in the Flesh, that the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit*.

Thus, of his Fullness do we all receive, and Grace for Grace——Grace for the Pardon of our Sins ; and Grace to enable us to do our Duty, according to the Measure of the Gift of Christ.

From the Glory of the Word Incarnate, that Glory which so evidently shewed him to be indeed *the only begotten of the Father* ; what should we learn, but to honour the Son, even as we honour the Father. To acknowledge him not only for our Lord, but our God : To pay our Homage to him as God by Nature, not merely by Office ; which is what, I believe, none but the refined Understanding of a Socinian can have any Notion of ; and whatever such vain Men may suggest to the contrary, let us rather join with the Angels, and triumphant Saints above ; where our Evangelist represents them, ascribing * *Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, as well to the Lamb*, which is the Title of the Word made Flesh, as to him that sitteth on the Throne for ever and ever.

From this Dignity of the Person, the Word made Flesh, and undergoing more than the common Miseries of Mortality for us ; we learn both to adore the exceeding abundant Riches of the Mercy of God, and to revere his Justice.—That God should so love the World, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting Life ; who can comprehend the Height and Depth of it ! Certainly, could any Thing bear a Man out in his Infidelity, it might be this ! But God's Thoughts are not as our Thoughts, nor his Ways as our Ways.

* Heb. viii. 12.

† Acts xiii. 38.

‖ Heb. viii. 10.

§ Rom. viii. 3, 4.

* Rev. v. 13.

For who were these perishing Creatures, so highly favoured, so wonderfully rescued? Were they not Men? Sinful and rebellious Men! And was not their Destruction wholly *of themselves*? Why then should God concern himself for their Recovery? Gracious had been the Condescension, and infinite the Goodness of the Creator, to have admitted to Mercy his apostate Creatures, when most importunately seeking to him.—But that God should vouchsafe to seek after Man; should send his own only begotten Son, to make the first Advances to them; to solicit their Return: That the Son of God, himself also God, should stoop so low as to cloath himself with the Rags of our Mortality, to dwell in one of these *Houses of Clay*; that he might raise us up to the Mansions of Bliss in Heaven: That he should not only be born, and dwell here, but at last give up himself to the most bitter Death: This is something altogether beyond, not Expression only, but our very Imagination also. To love those who love *us* is common; to love Enemies is the Advance of Christian Charity; but *so* to love Enemies as to die for them, to become capable of dying purely for *their* Sakes, is the peculiar Strain of divine Love:—And which, instead of setting forth the Greatness of, as we ought, we can only silently *adore*.

THE
COMFORTS
OF A
Good CONSCIENCE;
AND THE
TORMENTS of an Evil ONE.

THE
COMMENTS
OF A
GOOD CONSCIENCE;
AND THE
TORMENTS OF AN EVIL ONE.

J O B xxvii. 5, 6.

God forbid that I should justify you ! 'till I die, I will not remove my Integrity from me.

My Righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go ; my Heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.

IT is the Declaration of afflicted *Job*, in answer to those *miserable Comforters of his*, as we find them in the Beginning of the Book stiled, *his three Friends* : Weak and undiscerning certainly, however honest and well-meaning *Friends* ; who by a Mistake too common among Men, judging of the Virtues and Goodness of others by their Fortunes ; from their Friend's being stript of all Things else, would needs, each in their several Turns, strip him of his Innocence too ; and tho' they knew no Ill by him, nay, tho' they knew that he had always maintained the Character God gives him, of a *perfect and an upright Man, one that feared God, and eschewed Evil* ; yet from what had befallen him, they could not but take part with the Adversary, *Satan*, that old *Accuser*, and as they were no doubt prompted by him, charge him with Hypocrisy, and secret Impieties.

A Trial this, as it was the last, so certainly the greatest that ever the Patience of *Job* met with, and which required no less a Stock than his to carry him with any tolerable Temper through : For to those who have any just Notions of Honour, and whose insufferable Pride makes them not think themselves altogether above the rest of the World, and so regardless of what others say, or think of them ; to those who have ever known what a good Name is, nothing can ever be so *dear* and *valuable* ; no Wounds so sensible, how lightly soever they may be dealt about by others, as those which affect them in that *tenderest Part* : To such, had they nothing else left, it would be no small Comfort to have the good Opinion of others, to have them condole, if they did no more, the Hardness of their Case ; but instead of moving Pity, to have their very Calamities turned to their Reproach, to have the ill Usage of others made an Argument of their ill-deserving, and the Uncommonness of their Sufferings only look'd upon as the Effect of an uncommon Wickedness, who of us could bear it ? Especially to have such Reflections, as these come from the Mouths of those whom we thought our best Friends ; how shocking must be the Trial ! What an Edge must it give to every other Stroke of an adverse Fortune !

Accordingly we may observe this Pattern of Patience, tho' not so far provoked as to break forth into any Thing of ill Language ; or reviling them again,
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which most of us, in all likelihood, should have been; yet with no small Degree of Earnestness, and a manifestly uncommon Concern replying to their Charge, *God forbid that I should justify you!* that ever I should make your Words good, by acknowledging myself guilty of what you have accused me, or doing any Thing like it for the future. No, that be far from me, *'till I die, I will not remove my Integrity from me; my Righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my Heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.*

Which Words, as I just now hinted, may be understood, either as a Declaration of past Innocence, or a Resolution for future Behaviour, or indeed both; the former seems chiefly to have been intended by *Job*, as we may gather from the Verse before, *My Lips shall not speak Wickedness, nor my Tongue utter Deceit*, intimating, that so it would be should he own their Charge against him true: According to which Sense we are to interpret *removing his Integrity*, as in Words renouncing or disowning it; his *holding fast*, and *not letting go his Righteousness*, as persisting in, and standing stily to the Assertion of his Innocence; and *his Heart not reproaching him*, as not giving in to their Calumnies, and to please them contrary to the Convictions of his own Mind, professing himself an Hypocrite — But waving all Relation to *Job*, and his uncharitable or undiscerning Friends, I chuse rather to consider the Words as the zealous Resolution of every good Man, whom we may imagine to say, whatever I may hope to get, or whatever I may fear to lose in this World, whatever Circumstances I may be brought into, *'till I die, I will not remove my Integrity from me; my Righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my Heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.*

And first, I shall more particularly explain the Words, and shew how far such a Resolution may be practicable, or who it is that may be allowed to make it good.

Secondly, Shew what is the Wisdom and the Happiness of making and keeping to such a Resolution.

And in the third and last Place offer some Considerations for making it effectual.

I am first to state the Notion of this Resolution, and shew how far it is practicable; or who it is that may be allowed to make it good, by a more particular Explication of the Words of the Text. The former Clause, *I will not remove my Integrity from me*, seems to need little Enlargement; for Integrity every one knows to be but another Word for Uprightness, or what we more commonly call Honesty, dealing justly and fairly by every one; as by the *removing this from us* must be meant the turning aside to Methods of Fraud and Dishonesty, of Injury and Oppression, or doing in any Respect an ill Thing: This is what the good Man will sooner hazard his Life, or expose himself to certain Death, than knowingly and willfully by any Emergency be drawn into, *'till I die I will not remove my Integrity from me.*

And by this brief Descant upon the first Part of his Resolution, we may be easily let into the Sense of that which follows, *My Righteousness I hold fast, and will*

will not let it go ; which is indeed much the same Thing in other Words with that which went before, unless taking the Word Righteousness in that largest Sense wherein it is, I think, most frequently used in Scripture, we understand by it not only the Integrity or Uprightness before described in our Intercourse chiefly between Man and Man ; but an universal Rectitude or Holiness, doing virtuously in all Points, as well with respect to God and ourselves, as our Neighbour ; conforming all our Actions and Behaviour to that grand Rule of Right, the Will and Commands of God.

This the good Man resolves most constantly to adhere to ; the better to set forth the Firmness and Vigour of that Resolution. the Text, after the Manner of the *Hebrews*, expresses it both Ways, both affirmatively and negatively ; *I hold fast*, or I will hold fast, as a Man eagerly grasping something he is very fond of, in his Hand or Arms ; and as if that were not enough, he adds, *and will not let it go* ; intimating probably, that as he would not lightly give up, and himself recede from that Resolution, so nothing from *without* should force him from it. *My Righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go.*

Nor is the remaining Clause of the Resolution in the Text, however different in Sound, in Sense much differing from the two foregoing, *viz. My Heart shall not reproach me* ; for by Heart we are undoubtedly here, as frequently elsewhere, to understand the Mind or Conscience, or whatever you will call that Principle in us, which determines of the Good or Evil of our Actions. This is, as it were, God's Vicegerent in our Breasts, to see that we keep close to his Law in all we do : And when at any Time we knowingly and wilfully act otherwise, this is said to smite, reproach, or condemn us, *i. e.* it charges us with Guilt, gives us to understand, that we have basely and foolishly incurred the Displeasure of the Almighty by the Breach of his Laws, and alarms us with Apprehensions of ensuing Vengeance.

But who, may it be said, can be supposed *from his Days*, as the Margin reads, or for all his Life-long, to be altogether free from the Reproaches of a self-condemning Breast ! *What Man is he that doeth Good and sinneth not ?* Nay more than that, saith the Psalmist, *Who can tell how oft he offendeth ?*

Most undeniable it is, that in many Things we offend all, the very best of us ; nay even *Noah*, *Daniel* and *Job*, and the very best of Men that ever were : But then let it be remembered, that it is not every Offence or Deviation from the divine Law, that breaks in upon this Resolution, *My Heart shall not reproach me*, or that is inconsistent with that Character God himself gives *Job*, of a *perfect and an upright Man*. There are Infirmities and Surprises to which we shall always be liable, so long as we carry these Bodies of Flesh and Blood about with us ; but then so far as they are unavoidable, they are not so properly Matter of Reproach, unless for the Vileness of our Descent from an apostate Parent, as they are the Misfortunes and Unhappiness of our present Condition : Nay further, it is not every less heinous, tho' not altogether involuntary, and unavoidable Deviation from the divine Law, that such Resolution can be supposed to hold to ; but only, as was said before, *that we will not knowingly and wilfully, in any Instance, desert our Duty, or allow ourselves in any sinful Course* : And thus far every
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good Man resolves, and is careful to keep free from the Reproaches of his own Breast; which while he does, tho' conscious of many lesser Failings, but daily striving against, and lamenting even these, he may yet be said (as we find *H Ezekiah* appealing to God himself, that he had done) to walk before God with a perfect Heart. But I must observe on the other Hand, it is not every Man whose Heart does not actually reproach and condemn him, that can therefore be concluded to have kept his Integrity, or *not to have let go his Righteousness*; for tho' it be scarce possible in any flagrant Instance at least to have done this without some severe Lashes, yet many have so long turned a deaf Ear to the Reproaches of that internal Monitor, that it ceases any longer to speak to them, or they at least to hear it: Their Heart or Conscience is grown hard and callous, or, according to the Apostle's Metaphor, as it were seared with a hot Iron, and so insensible of any Impression that might be made upon it, they have allowed themselves in a vicious Course, till they think at last there is no Harm in it; or they think not of any Thing of that Nature at all, and so sin on without Remorse: He therefore, and he only, that may be construed to make good the Resolution of the Text is the Man whose Heart or Conscience does not, nor has any just Ground to reproach him, with any known wilful Neglect, or Violation of the Will and Commands of God: He who constantly *exercises himself*, as the great Apostle declares *he* did, to keep a Conscience void of Offence both toward God and toward Man.

And having thus fully shewn the Nature and Import of the good Man's Resolution, I come now, in the

Second Place, to shew the Wisdom and Happiness of making and keeping to such a Resolution. It is our Wisdom because it will be our Happiness; according to that Remark of the wisest of Men, If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; for it is the very Notion of Wisdom to find out the properest Means and Methods to the best End, to consult our true Interest, and bring us to the greatest Happiness; and to pursue any Thing else to the Neglect of, or in Contradiction to this, can be no other than the grossest, and most wretched Folly.

Now, that to maintain our Integrity, or keep a Conscience void of Offence, does always best consult our Happiness, will abundantly appear to any, that gives himself Leave ever so little to reflect upon the Nature of those good Things, it can at any Time oblige him to forego, or the Evils it may expose him to suffer; and upon the Good or Evil that will surely and unavoidably attend the *retaining or foregoing* of a good Conscience.

That it is best to maintain our Integrity, when worldly Interest and Conscience lead the same Way, there needs no Proof, since none are so profligate as to be *wicked* purely for *Wickedness Sake*; they would rather always, if they could, as *Tully* observes, enjoy the *Pleasure* or the *Profit* without *the Sin*; and that Honesty does usually at long run prove the best Policy, even with respect to temporal Interest and Advantage, is an Observation common to a Proverb;
nor

nor are there wanting Reasons why in the Nature of Things it generally should prove so, because as well our Credit and Reputation among Men is thereby best secured; as well as the Blessing of Heaven more likely to be entailed upon our Endeavours.

But waving these, which are indeed but accidental Advantages, tho' far from unlikely ones, of an honest Industry; and putting the worst of the Case; supposing a Man's Duty and Interest to clash, and that by wounding his Conscience he might have a Prospect of raising himself to great Honour, or filling his House with Silver and Gold; and by keeping close to his Duty, he is not only obliged to forego all this, but even to suffer also further *for Righteousness Sake*.

Suppose him now to chuse the first of these, rather to forego his *Duty* than his *Interest*, not to suggest, that after all, he may be disappointed of his Aim, that unsuccessful Villany is no such unheard-of Thing; but allowing him to succeed according to, or even beyond his utmost Wishes, what has he at last gained? Why he has got Money, or he has got Honour, (the outward Ensigns of it, I mean, for real Contempt will be sure to attend him,) but has he got Happiness? Has he found Rest to his Soul?

Alas nothing less! for we need not the Authority of a Revelation from Heaven to prove, that a Man's Life, the Happiness and Enjoyment of his Life that is, if not perhaps the Continuance of it too, consists not in the *Abundance* of the Things which he possesseth; especially if that Abundance be the Purchase of a prostituted Conscience: Far otherwise! The Happiness of a Man as Man must consist chiefly in the Quiet and Tranquillity of his own Mind; in comfortable Reflexions upon his past Actions, and well-grounded, pleasing Prospects for Futurity. Without Peace of Mind most sure it is, that all the Wealth of the *Indies*, and all the Crowns and Scepters in the Universe, can never afford any solid Satisfaction: And no less sure it is, even the Infidel himself, must be convinced, that *there is no Peace to the Wicked, but he is like the troubled Sea*, perpetually rack'd and disquieted with guilty Reflections, and gloomy Fears: Or if by some brutal Gratifications, with which his ill-gotten Abundance of worldly Goods may supply him, he be able in great measure to stifle such uneasy Thoughts at present; what yet will be his Happiness, but that of the Beast which perisheth, and which must in a little Time perish with him?

Such is the Portion of the Hypocrite and the Sinner in his very best Estate; but should the *evil Days* overtake him, should *the Iniquity of his Heels compass him about*, should he at any Time fall under any great Calamity; should Pain and Sickness spoil the Relish of his sensual Enjoyments; should Death itself seem to draw near; and certain it is, that all his Wealth and Titles, all his crafty Fetches, and base Compliances, will never long be able to screen him from these latter; what then shall be his Comfort? How shall he then be able to support himself under the Terrors of a troubled Mind? A wounded Spirit, a *Conscience* once awakened to a Sense of Guilt, says the Wise Man, *who can bear!* Who can at present bear! To say nothing of the Gnawings of that never-dying Worm that is to be the sure Consequence of these in another World.

Behold then the Bargain thou hast made, whoever thou art, that to get, or to secure an Estate or Dignity, hast parted with thy Innocence, and made Ship-

wreck of a good Conscience! Thou hast got what cannot make thee happy while thou hast it ; and what will make thee infinitely more miserable, when thou comest to want it ; and want it e'er long inevitably thou must : In a Word, thou hast lessened, at least very much depraved, the *Enjoyments* of Life, and encreased and aggravated all the *Evils* of it : Thou hast made the most prosperous Condition scarce tolerable to thee, if thou carry about the Thought and Reason of a Man ; and a State of Adversity, shouldst thou ever fall into it, altogether insupportable : Lo! such is every Man that strengtheneth himself in his Wickedness.

But let us now, on the other Hand, take a View of the *good Man* who adheres to his *Duty*, rather than his worldly *Interest*, who will still retain his Integrity, tho' he suffer the Loss of all Things else. I will not suggest, that possibly by this Means he may at long-run best consult his temporal Interest too, tho' thus it often happens without a Miracle ; but suppose him, for the Sake of a good Conscience, actually in *Job's* Condition, stript of all he once had, and naked as he at first came into the World.

What has he yet lost ? Why, what as we have seen would have been far from making him happy, had he kept it ; nay, what must have made him, supposing him especially to retain any tolerable Sense of Duty, in the very best Circumstances as to this World, extremely miserable : What he could not possibly have long kept, and what, while he yet possessed, he might have been incapable of enjoying.

He has lost his Honour and Estate, he is now poor and despised perhaps, the Scorn of Men, and the very Outcast of the People. But is he therefore miserable ? 'Tis true these are Circumstances of no small Uneasiness to Flesh and Blood ; but has the good Man nothing in Exchange ? Nothing to support and comfort him ? It is a Chance, if suffering Goodness, as bad as the World now, or at any Time goes, should not meet with many Friends ; this however has somewhat of Chance in it.

But if he look within, and reflect at any Time upon the Cause of his present Nakedness and Suffering, what a never-failing Well-spring of Joy is there ? How does it put Gladness in his Heart infinitely beyond the Increase or the Enjoyment of Corn and Wine ? How does he more rejoice in having so *lost*, than even before in the *possessing* of this World's Goods ? A Joy, a Satisfaction this, which as they did not give, nor in the least add to, so neither can they take from, or diminish, but which increases rather with the *Loss* of them ; and a Joy which nothing else, not all the Powers of Earth and Hell, can ever deprive him of.

Into whatever Circumstances of Want and Pain he may be brought, he is still sure to be well pleased with *himself*, nay, the *greater* are his Sufferings from *without*, the *louder* are the Applauses *within* : The greater Evidences he gives of his Love and steadfast Adherence to God and Goodness, the greater are his Affurances of the divine Favour : The God whom he serves he knows is yet able to deliver him, to supply his Wants, and remove his Sufferings : Nay, he knows further, that if he sees it best for him, he will also surely deliver him, and bless his latter End, *as to this World*, even more than his Beginning.

Or,

Or, if infinite Wisdom shall see fit still to prolong his Trials, and lengthen out his Sufferings, he still rests assured, that it shall one Day tend to the Increase of Glory, and endless Felicity ; nay, that long it cannot be before he go to that Place, *where the Weary be at Rest*, but whither, tho' not the Labours and the Sorrows, yet the Reward of his Works shall follow him ; and if the King of Terrors himself approaches, gladly he runs forth to meet him, rejoicing with *Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory*.

So that upon the Whole, the Man who abides by his Resolution of retaining his Integrity, and acting always according to the Dictates of his Conscience, let the worst come to the worst, does only then forego the good Things of this Life, when they would cease to be good ; when instead of yielding him Comfort and Satisfaction, they would prove Matter of the greatest Torment and Vexation : Himself when having nothing, is as still possessing all Things ; he only takes the most effectual Method of being secure against Misfortunes, by turning the greatest Evils of Life, into the greatest Blessings ; he is only careful at the Expence of a trifling Interest, to make and keep those his fast Friends, who would otherwise be his worst Enemies, God and his own Conscience : In a Word, he only consults his *present Peace*, and *future Recompence* ; he is sure not to be very *miserable here*, and to be superlatively *happy hereafter*. With good Reason therefore may every good Man say, God forbid that ever I should justify or approve myself to the World, by being secretly convicted of Insincerity before God ; No ! *'till I die I will not remove my Integrity from me : My Righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go ; my Heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.*

I should now proceed to offer some Considerations for stirring us up to *make*, and *keep* to such a Resolution ; but these the Time will not suffer me to *enlarge* upon, and they may be easily supplied from what has been already said.

As, that we should reflect often upon that little Time, we can at longest have to continue here :

The Emptiness and Uncertainty of all worldly Enjoyments, whilst we are yet on this Side the Grave :

The little Enjoyment especially we can take in the Spoils of our Innocence :

Upon the Comforts of a good Conscience, and the Torments of an evil one ; tho' not so sensibly felt perhaps at present, yet at least in Times of Calamity and Distress, under Pain and Sickness, and at the Hour of Death.

Above all let us reflect upon the foolish Bargain we must make, could we purchase the whole World at the Expence of our own Soul, *i. e.* of our *Integrity* : Upon that inestimable *Treasure in Heaven, that faileth not*, and upon that insufferable gnawing *Worm in Hell that dieth not*.

And lastly, let us beg of God, whose Grace alone can be sufficient for us, that he being our Ruler and Guide, we may so pass through *Things temporal*, that we finally lose not the *Things eternal*.

F I N I S.

